

**Policy Board**  
Minutes of October 4, 2013  
Rhode Island Department of Administration  
Conference Room "A"  
One Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908

**MEMBERS/DESIGNEES PRESENT:**

Major Michael P. Quinn, Johnson and Wales University, Chair, (voting member)  
Director A.T. Wall, Rhode Island Department of Corrections, Vice-Chair, (voting member)  
Chief Judge Jeanna LaFazia, District Court of Rhode Island, (voting member)  
Colonel Steven G. O'Donnell, Superintendent, Rhode Island State Police, (voting member)  
Director Craig Stenning, Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals  
(BHDDH), (voting member)  
Public Defender Mary McElroy, Rhode Island Public Defender, (voting member)  
Chief John Desmarais, President, Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association, (voting member)  
Marshal Jack Chartier, Rhode Island State Fire Marshal, (voting member)  
Mr. Edward J. Walsh, Ocean Tides, (voting member)  
Mr. Carl Weinberg, (voting member)  
Mr. Jonathan Houston, Justice Assistance, (voting member)  
Mr. Daniel Knight, Salve Regina University, (voting member)  
Mr. Robert O'Neil, Public Member, (voting member)  
Ms. Zulma Garcia, Designee of Ms. Debra DeBare, Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic  
Violence, (voting member)  
Deputy Attorney General Gerald Coyne, Designee of Attorney General Peter F. Kilmartin,  
(voting member)  
Ms. Marisa White, Designee of Chief Justice Paul A. Suttell, Supreme Court of Rhode Island,  
(voting member)  
Mr. Kevin McKenna, Designee of Dr. Janice DeFrances, Rhode Island Department of Children,  
Youth, and Families, (voting member)  
Mr. Stephen Waluk, District Court of Rhode Island  
Colonel Hugh Clements, Providence Police Department  
Ms. Jennifer M. Olivelli, Supreme Court of Rhode Island  
Mr. Steve King, Member of the VOCA Advisory Committee  
Ms. Wendy Becker, Member of the VOCA Advisory Committee

**PUBLIC SAFETY GRANTS ADMINISTRATION OFFICE:**

Mr. Thomas Mongeau, Administrative Manager  
Ms. Gail Pereira, Grant Manager  
Mr. Joseph Persia, Grant Manager

**1. Welcome and Introductions – Major Michael P. Quinn, Chair of Policy Board:**

Major Quinn called the meeting to order and noted that a quorum was present.  
Introductions were made.

**2. Approval of September 26, 2013 Policy Board Meeting Minutes:**

Major Quinn asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Policy Board meeting of September 26, 2013. Mr. Houston moved:

**TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE POLICY BOARD MEETING OF  
SEPTEMBER 26, 2013 AS PRESENTED.**

Deputy Coyne seconded the motion. Under discussion, Major Quinn asked to change his signature block on the minutes to "Criminal Justice Policy Board."

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.**

**3. Discussion/Approval of FY 2013 Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program – Ms. Gail Pereira:**

Ms. Pereira stated that she applied for this competitive grant for the first time this year through the U.S. Attorney's Office. The Public Safety Grants Administration Office administers the program, provides quarterly reporting, and also utilizes the 5 percent administrative fee. This is one of sixteen communities receiving this money in the amount of \$150,000. The funding is for violent gangs, guns, and crime prevention. The Attorney General's Office and the Providence Police Department work with the Institute for the Study and Practice of Non-Violence (ISPNV), and there is a research component with Roger Williams University. The grant is broken down into \$7,500 for administrative costs, \$72,500 for patrols for the Providence Police Department, \$40,000 for the salary for one streetworker for the ISPNV, and \$30,000 for Roger Williams University for salary and fringe benefits for a research assistant and the purchase of a laptop computer. There being no questions, Public Defender McElroy moved:

**TO APPROVE FUNDING FOR THE SAFE STREETS PROGRAM AS  
PRESENTED.**

Deputy Coyne seconded the motion.

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.**

**4. Discussion/Approval of FY 2013 National Criminal History Improvement Program Grant – Mr. Tom Mongeau:**

Mr. Mongeau reported that this is a competitive grant that was awarded in the amount of \$158,792. The goal of the grant is to enhance criminal histories, and this a spin-off from the Brady Bill. Ten percent will be set aside for administrative costs in the amount of \$15,879. The courts will receive \$52,000 to conduct twenty-six overtime sessions for research and entry of

dispositions. The Rhode Island State Police Rhode Island Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (RILETS) will receive \$90,913 for the installation of an Internet

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proxy server to replace an outdated server. This project has statewide impact. Mr. Weinberg moved:

**TO APPROVE THE NCHIP FUNDING AS PRESENTED.**

Director Wall seconded the motion.

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.**

**5. Discussion/Approval of FY 2013 Victims of Crime Act Grant Program – Mr. Tom Mongeau and Mr. Steve King**

Mr. Mongeau introduced Mr. Steve King, from the VOCA Advisory Committee, to address concerns from the Policy Board about the grant-making process. Mr. King said that he retired four years ago after serving 35 years with the Court. He talked about his qualifications and provided an overview of the grant-making process, including the application, review, monitoring and evaluation.

The VOCA grant program began in October 1984 and is funded through fines collected by federal offenders. Each state is awarded a base of \$500,000 and additional monies, based on population. The purpose of the grant program is to enhance services to victims of crime. This year's award is \$1,705,000, which is the same as last year. The award will also be the same next year. In 2002, the award was \$1,610,000. This was an increase of \$95,000.

*Application Process:* Mr. Joseph Persia, the VOCA Grant Administrator, completes the application. Reviews begin in February/March each year. Mr. Persia reviews the information and prepares the Request for Proposals (RFP). The 15-page RFP is posted on the Public Safety Grants Administration Office (PSGAO) website and is sent to all current and past recipients as well as others who request a copy. The RFP is also advertised in the *Providence Journal* and in the RING newspaper network. Mr. Persia scheduled a pre-proposal conference on March 29<sup>th</sup> to review the application process, reporting requirements, and he provided contact information. Completed applications were due on April 19<sup>th</sup>. One copy is submitted via e-mail along with one original and six copies that are either delivered or mailed. Mr. Persia then reviewed the applications and developed a summary for the VOCA Advisory Committee. He organized the applications into a box for each committee member to pick up. This year there were 38 applications. Each application is 17-30 pages long and is reviewed to ensure that it meets the grant requirements. A rating sheet is utilized, and it takes approximately 20-30 minutes to review and rate one application. There are 21 questions on the rating sheet, based on federal VOCA requirements. May 7<sup>th</sup> was the first meeting of the Advisory Committee, and three to four additional meetings were held. The last meeting was June 28<sup>th</sup>. Each meeting was posted

on the Secretary of State's website as well as two other locations, in accordance with the Open Meetings law. The Committee reviewed the applications. When questions came up,

Mr. Persia would contact the agency to present the questions or concerns and would receive either verbal or written response. Sometimes meeting are held with the committee and the applicant, if necessary. The committee reviews the budget as well.

This year they had \$400,000 more in requests than money available. Of the thirty-seven proposals, only nine received same amount they requested. On June 28<sup>th</sup> the committee scheduled a meeting for October 29<sup>th</sup> to discuss monitoring of programs.

*Monitoring:* Mr. Persia notifies successful applicants, and the agency then submits its updated budget. The agency also signs forms that include assurances, conditions, etc. Written approval is required for changes. There are no extensions, and the program cannot generate income. There are guidelines for records and reports, and quarterly statistical reports are required. Quarterly narrative reports for activities, accomplishments, and challenges are also required as well as any actions the agency took to overcome challenges, and financial reports.

The recommendations the Policy Board has today are the result of this process. Mr. King said that he, Mr. Persia, and Wendy Becker, another Advisory Committee member, are here to answer questions.

Major Quinn thanked Mr. King for his service.

Mr. Houston said that Mr. King provided an excellent presentation. He said his concern is for the limited resources for direct services for crime victims and not replacing other currently available resources. He stated that the ISP NV has never been involved in crime victim services. Last year they did not, and their proposal reads like the Streetworker Program. He said he never saw a response from them and asked if we are using valuable resources from VOCA for a crime prevention program.

Mr. King responded that the ISP NV first utilized VOCA funds eight to ten years ago, and the subcommittee also had questions. Mr. Teny Gross met with the committee. It was clear at that time that they were working with crime victims. The committee again met with Mr. Gross, who provided statistics. VOCA partially funds a staff person to go to homes, hospitals, help with funeral arrangement, go to court with victims, and de-escalate possible retaliation. This may be prevention.

Chief Judge LaFazia asked if there is follow up with victims. Mr. King responded that yes, they have comments from victims regarding the helpfulness of the program. Mr. Persia receives quarterly statistics as well. Deputy Coyne stated that there are two programs: One is a victim support center, and the second is the Streetworker Program. He has heard the highest praise

for the victim support program. They mostly deal with homicide victims. Deputy Coyne asked to clarify which program the committee has received feedback on. Mr.

King responded that the ISPNV provides statistics on both programs and that there is some overlap among programs.

Public Defender McElroy said she is new to the Policy Board and asked if this supports a subset of victims that may not respond to traditional support. She said that the streetworkers have their pulse on gangs, etc. Mr. King responded that there are programs that are statewide, and some that serve smaller populations such as the streetworkers. Mr. Houston said he would like to see that type of summation when the Policy Board votes. Mr. King agreed. He said that the Advisory Committee could provide a different explanation as well as more detail for the Policy Board.

Director Stenning stated that the only program on the application summary that applied but received no funding is the East Bay Community Action Program. He asked if that was based on a faulty application or some other reason. Mr. King responded that this is a new agency applying for funding for the first time. He stated that the committee debated this and tried to find funding for them. The grant application was weaker; however, it was their first application. Since the committee had the same amount of money as last year, they did not have funds to support a new program.

Director Stenning said that this tends to make the grant program become a "closed shop," if a program receives money, and others cannot receive funds in future with the same amount of federal funding. Mr. King responded that the committee looks at the budgets in an effort to get as many programs funded as possible. He explained that they use scores, and in fact, with limited funding, it is difficult to fund new programs. He said the committee tries, but it is difficult. There is no limit from VOCA on the length of programs, and the committee can continue to fund the same programs each year. However, if a new program is funded, what would be the impact on currently funded programs? Sometimes the committee has felt that programs did not do what they were supposed to do, and the committee eliminated them. Level funding for agencies is really a reduction, due to limited funding. When the meetings were completed this year, the committee felt good about what it had done, but felt bad that it could not give everyone everything they needed.

Major Quinn asked if there is information available for new funders. Mr. King responded that there is, and those organizations contact Mr. Persia. Major Quinn recognized Wendy Becker. She said that she does not feel that the program is a "closed shop." This year the committee is proposing a new agency be funded. The committee can work with new applicants, but it is a competitive process. Major Quinn thanked both Mr. King and Ms. Becker. He said that the Policy Board is fortunate to have Steve King working on this process. Additionally, it is also incumbent on the Policy Board to make inquiries into the work of the sub-committees.

Chief Judge LaFazia stated that it might be helpful to have the committee's score cards. She said she would like to see those. Major Quinn agreed that this is a good suggestion. Mr. Mongeau will then follow this for all grant programs, not just VOCA. Chief Judge LaFazia said that all members of the Policy Board have busy schedules, but it is important the Board not just rubber stamp funding approvals.

Ms. Garcia stated that Ms. DeBare had concerns about duplication of services for New England Advocacy Services. She asked if the committee looks at applications for potential duplication of services. Major Quinn recalled Ms. DeBare's concerns; this goes to the process. Mr. King said this was evaluated, and the committee agreed that it was coordination of services and not duplication. The program asked for \$6,000 for office supplies and travel. It is an all-volunteer program. Staff provides an escort and advocate for domestic violence victims when they are going to court. The program has a list of clients for temporary restraining orders, and assists the victim with the law enforcement and court process. Mr. King said that it is not duplication of services, because court advocates cannot be with all victims, and they cannot sit with the victim. This will be one of the programs the committee would contact to meet with them. The program provided the committee with a brochure of its services, and they work collaboratively with other agencies.

Ms. Olivelli said she can see where there is some confusion over the Streetworker Program. The program receives funding under crime prevention and again under VOCA. When partial funding is provided for partial positions it is a matter of reporting, because the person works on other programs as well. They need to have data to support the grant. Public Defender McElroy stated that the ISP NV program may provide programs for those who are resistant to traditional services.

Chief Judge LaFazia stated that her understanding of New England Advocacy Services is that there was a letter from her provided in support of this program. For the record, she stated that she did not know her letter was being attached to the application. That letter was a result of a different agreement. They have an agreement with the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and they refer to Coalition, because they are comfortable with that. Chief Judge LaFazia said that the Court does not want to have many different people providing the same services. Anyone can accompany someone to court; it is an open court. She said she did not want anything additional on her letter saying she was working with this agency, because she had no information on the training the program director had received.

Mr. King responded that the committee expects the group to meet with the court advocate and work with them. It is up to the judge in the courtroom whether the advocate can speak. This is first time funding this program, and the committee will have the contact person from the



agency meet with the committee to ensure coordination and to check on the program. Chief Judge LaFazia stated that monitoring should not just be self-reporting. It should also

include some feedback from stakeholders. It could be good, however, a lot of harm could come from it as well if it is not good. Mr. King said the committee cannot call one agency and ask if the agency thinks the committee should fund other agency. This is a competitive process. He explained that he can check with the court, judges, etc. to see if the agency is doing all the right things.

Mr. O'Neil stated that Rhode Island has a history of success with independent programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Marathon House, as well as non-traditional programs. The Streetworker Program can be successful if it is run properly. The committees have been very professional, and he said that he is satisfied with committee's work.

Mr. Houston added that if the ISPNV proposal passes, he asked the Board to look at the operational goals and plans. ISPNV states three goals and two objectives. The second goal is to prevent violence—that is a crime prevention issue. If they are funded, that should come out of the proposal. Goal 1 is to provide 24/7 response, and Goal 3 is victim advocacy, which is fine. Ms. Olivelli said that agencies can perform several functions; they are listing the goals and objectives of the agency. Director Stenning said he read the goals and objectives of the program.

Major Quinn stated that if this committee is interested in hearing about process; that has been addressed. If the Policy Board is questioning that the committee did not do due diligence, that is the purpose of today's meeting. He suggested moving on with the meeting. Public Defender McElroy said that the Policy Board needs to let the committees do their work; not pick apart the grants. The committee did a very thorough job of vetting the grant applications. It is the Policy Board's job to accept their recommendations or not.

Major Quinn said that the statute allows the Policy Board to develop committees to vet the applications; the Board relies on them to evaluate those programs. The process works well. He said he is happy with the detail that Mr. King and the committee went through with these programs. It takes a great deal of work, time, and dedication, and the detail that they went through with these programs, especially for retirees.

Chief Judge LaFazia agreed that this is a lot of work, and it is a good process. The Policy Board now has additional information, which is important for the Board to ensure that as it signs off on the committee's work. It is also healthy to ask questions and have them answered. A valid question may be that a particular program may be a great program, but is it a program that falls under the area of focus for the VOCA grant? If so, then the Board can move forward.

Mr. King said that the ISPNV application is not funding a full-time position; probably a half-time position. The agencies do many things under VOCA. It is appropriate to keep people from becoming victims. However, this is not for VOCA funding, but is an important part of

the work. Other objectives are eligible for VOCA funding. Mr. Houston recommended that they modify their application and edit this out to make the proposal clean. Major Quinn thanked Mr. Houston for this recommendation.

Major Quinn asked for a motion to recommend \$1,705,796 for this year along with the allocations recommended by the VOCA Advisory Committee. Ms. White moved:

**TO FUND THE VOCA GRANT PROGRAM AT \$1,705,796 AS PRESENTED.**

Mr. Walsh seconded the motion. The following members recused themselves: Colonel O'Donnell, because he is a member of the Board of Directors of MADD-RI and the ISPNV; Mr. Houston, because he is the Executive Director of Justice Assistance; and Ms. Garcia, because she is a staff member of the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.**

Major Quinn asked for a motion to approve the acceptance of \$1,814,946 for the FY 2013 grant program. Mr. Walsh moved:

**TO ACCEPT \$1,814,946 FOR FY 2013 GRANT PROGRAM.**

Ms. Olivelli seconded the motion. Major Quinn said he is not opposed to the same people recusing. Board members should see Mr. Mongeau for recusal forms. Public Defender McElroy asked if she needed to be recused. Major Quinn stated that the Policy Board received an advisory opinion from the Ethics Commission stating that state employee members of the Board do not need to recuse themselves; only private non-profit members.

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.**

Colonel O'Donnell stated that the VOCA Advisory Committee has done an outstanding job. He asked who ensures that grant recipients do the right thing with the money they receive. Mr. King responded that Mr. Persia receives quarterly reports from the agencies. In the past, the Advisory Committee has met with first-time applicants and other agencies throughout the year. It is labor-intensive; the committee consists of all volunteers, but they try to meet. Also, when the committee hears about issues, it monitor that. He reported that the Advisory Committee is always looking for new members. If anyone on the Policy Board would like to serve on the Advisory Committee, or if members know anyone who could serve, that would be helpful. He added that the committee also reviews the quarterly reports. It may also be helpful to review the previous years' achievements as well. With new programs, the committee goes to those independent sources to ensure that the agencies are doing what they said they would. The committee also obtains letters from other agencies to show collaboration.

Major Quinn: recommend a review of the various committees, obtain their recommendation process, and use a similar instrument as much as possible.

**6. New Business:**

There was no new business.

**7. Adjourn:**

Chief Judge LaFazia moved:

**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

The motion was seconded by Public Defender McElroy.

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN THE AFFIRMATIVE, AND  
THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Laird  
Recorder

Approved by:

Thomas Mongeau  
Administrative Manager

Major Michael P. Quinn, Chair  
Criminal Justice Policy Board